



News Release

Statewide Job Shadow Program Kicks off in February

For Immediate Release

December 29, 2010

Thousands of workers representing all sorts of professions in South Carolina will again devote a portion of their workday to give young people a chance to explore their futures by “shadowing” them during the month of February, 2011. The initiative officially begins February 2nd, Groundhog Day, the traditional kick-off day for the event which started as part of National Groundhog Job Shadow Day in 1997.

The statewide job shadow campaign is part of the nationwide effort, which brings together a coalition of business, educational and governmental organizations with the purpose of helping young people explore firsthand the skills and education needed to be successful in the job market of today and the future.

During the months of December and early January, Regional Career Specialists and career specialists from schools throughout the state arrange shadowing experiences for students with employers, representing a variety of career fields, who are willing to spend a day with a student to share their knowledge about how to succeed in their particular business.

The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW), the State Department of Education, and Junior Achievement of South Carolina have joined with such national sponsors as America’s Promise, AT&T, Cisco, and the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor to endorse job shadowing.

Last February, 67,537 students in South Carolina from the sixth grade through college shadowed more than 28,000 business partners according to figures collected by the State Department of Education. Some 38,000 students were actual on-site shadows while a little over 29,000 students, many in rural areas, participated with virtual job shadowing experiences.

“Any up close and personal experience with those working in the professional world gives young people an excellent opportunity to make intelligent choices about their own future career,” said John L. Finan, executive director of the SCDEW. “It is very important to encourage students to begin their career planning early and take every opportunity afforded them to learn from those who have been successful in their chosen profession.”



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Job shadowing exposes students to a wide range of career choices, and it also shows them how the academic skills they learn in class will be useful in their chosen careers.

“Job shadowing provides broad opportunities for students to receive a glimpse into careers that may interest them,” said Dr. James Couch, director, Office of Career and Technology Education at the State Department of Education. “The experiences serve as support to their future educational and career plans through career awareness and exploration.”

While the month of February is the traditional time that students use for job shadowing experiences in South Carolina, many schools report that shadowing has now evolved into a year-round occurrence and, as the numbers show, is well received by the business community.

For more information about job shadowing, please contact the career specialist at a school near you.